

COMMUNIST LEADERS EXPLAIN POSITION IN 1946 CAMPAIGN

[Milwaukee, March 10] — The Capital Times has published a series of articles and several editorial comments on what is alleged to have been the "Communist" attitude towards Sen. McCarthy and ex-Sen. Bob LaFollette. It would be unfortunate if confused ideas on this subject should be permitted to continue in the thinking of your readers that may become a hindrance to the goal of defeating Sen. McCarthy this fall and riddling the political scene of this sinister and unscrupulous character. Therefore, for the purpose of clarification, we wish to make our position emphatically clear, and to keep the record historically correct.

The Capital Times has done a great deal to provide impetus and encouragement to the majority of Wisconsinites who fervently wish to rid their state of the disgrace of being represented in the U.S. Senate by Joe McCarthy. We agree that mccarthyism is the most rabid expression of the current drive towards fascism, embodying and leading the most evil forces in American life.

However, it is tragic to see the columns of The Capital Times used on occasion to justify the methods of mccarthyism. It is tragic to see a man of Mr. Evjue's background and record, respected throughout Wisconsin and the nation as a fighting liberal, stoop to McCarthy's level. We refer particularly to the series of articles by Aldric Revell, which made the ridiculous claim that the Communists were responsible for McCarthy's election, and the inference that the Wisconsin Communists secretly support McCarthy.

We are certain that Joe McCarthy in his wildest ravings never dreamed he would be red-baited, least of all by The Capital Times. He must appreciate the humor of this acceptance of his own theories by The Capital Times but the situation is not so funny to those who realize that this represents another gain for McCarthy.

Revell has lumped together a collection of half truths, distortions and outright falsehoods, allegedly describing the policies in 1946 of the CIO, the general progressive movement and the Communist Party of Wisconsin, stirring the whole assortment together into a stew, falsely labeled as "Communist policy." The Communist Party speaks only for itself, it cannot speak for any other group. We wish to protest against these malignments.

Revell bases his contentions mainly on the arguments that the Communists (and he generously encompasses a large sector of the labor movement within this word) did not support Bob LaFollette for reelection in 1946. Rather, he states, because we were sharply critical of him, we are really responsible for McCarthy's election.

Certainly, the Communists were critical of Bob LaFollette. In 1946 we criticized him for the same reasons as did Phil Murray, Sidney Hillman, the national leadership of the CIO, and other important sections of the labor movement. We shall not withdraw a single word of the criticism of 1946.

The Capital Times itself gives the reasons for this, in revealing why LaFollette had lost the support of important sections of the labor movement. The basic reasons given are that LaFollette had abandoned Roosevelt program of peaceful coexistence of the major world powers. Both LaFollettes identified themselves with pro-Nazi elements abroad and with the MacArthurs and the Tafts at home, thus losing the confidence of those who still

adhered to the LaFollette-Roosevelt tradition, that was now spurned by the younger LaFollettes. We recall that when Bob LaFollette chose to run on the Republican ticket, one of his severest critics was The Capital Times. The finishing touch as far as labor was concerned was the open support that Bob LaFollette accepted from Robert A. Taft. Already in 1945, Bob LaFollette had begun to embrace what now forms the central core of Joe McCarthy's program. He was defeated because a lot of voters were disappointed in LaFollette and were not wise to Joe McCarthy.

Labor concerned itself with the Democratic race—from the first throwing its support to McMurray and participating in a number of congressional races. Bob LaFollette defeated himself. Since 1946 he has abandoned even a pretense to crusading for progressivism in politics or civil life. He has retired to a cushy job in Washington as lobbyist for some of American's most powerful and reactionary trusts — his father's and the American people's bitterest enemies.

It is worth going into the record of 1946, if for no other reason than to glean a few lessons that may serve us well in 1952. We Communists will unite with everybody, including supporters of Truman, Kefauver, Taft, Eisenhower, or Warren to defeat McCarthy. But at the same time, we know that mccarthyism as a force in politics does not originate only through Joe McCarthy.

Mccarthyism is the ultimate expression of the reactionary policies of Truman's bi-partisan administration. Vito Marcantonio well put it that "mccarthyism is the Frankenstein created by Truman."

The danger of mccarthyism cannot be averted if liberals try to defend themselves from McCarthy by competing with him in how best to wreck the hopes for world peace and by helping to take up Hitler's battle cry of "defeating world communism."

To defeat McCarthy, requires unity of all who are willing to defend the simple rights of conscience. It requires a resolute battle against mccarthyism from whatever source, be it McCarthy, Truman or Taft. It means that the Taft-Hartley Act, the McCarran Act, the Smith Act, and the resulting witchhunts and persecutions emanating from the Truman Administration must join Joe McCarthy on the garbage heap of history. It means that civil rights and justice must be restored to real life, with full meaning to all citizens, including the Negro people and those who do not accept the wars thrust on us by profit crazed few. It means a resolute fight for peace and the end of wars such as the Korean war.

It may be remembered that in Germany it was Hindenburg, the lesser evil, who surrendered to Hitler just as Truman is surrendering to McCarthy. Yet the vicious lie was attempted that the Communists were responsible for Hitler. This lie was so thoroughly exposed that no one could countenance it today. Let us not repeat the same mistakes that led to the victory of Nazism in Germany. McCarthy and mccarthyism must be defeated.—Communist Party of Wisconsin, Jack Kling, State Chairman, Fred Blair, Vice-Chairman.

(EDITOR'S NOTE—See today's column "Hello Wisconsin" on Page 1 for reply to this letter.)

To The Journal: Your editorial "No Communists Wanted in Union" was indeed encouraging to the average employer, the person you term "the average sidelines American." But I doubt if the average worker will welcome your praise of a union leadership which adopts the disastrous, splitting policy of anticommunism. Too many American unions have been smashed by this policy, not to mention the entire German labor movement which was crushed by Hitler under the claim of "eliminating communism."

Communists belong to trade unions because the unions are the basic organizations of the workers, and the Communist party is based on the working class, most of its members being workers. It is just that simple.

No antilabor people or "scabs" can belong to the Communist party. And what governs our conduct in unions? Not "orders from Moscow," as you put it, but our party constitution, Article VI, Section II, which reads: "Every party member in a mass organization shall work to promote and strengthen the given organization and protect the interests of its members."

Why, then, do certain union leaders want to kick out the Communists? For one thing, in unions that are gangster controlled or run in dictatorial fashion, the "leaders" naturally oppose any democracy in the union. What better method, they think, is there than to say "Communists are bad," and then label all the opposition Communists?

For another thing, anti-Semites or anti-Negro "leaders" can cover up their un-American prejudice by saying, "We're not excluding them because they are Jews or Negroes but because they are Communists."

Take this Utility Workers' union leadership which you praise so highly. James Fisher and William J. Pachler, who are responsible for this anti-Communist clause, are former heads of the Consolidated-Edison company union.

The Communists in that industry joined with other progressives to build a CIO union. In the thirties, to head off this union, Fisher and Pachler took out a Class B charter in the AFL Electrical Workers. Soon, however, they felt the AFL was too "radical" for them. They left the AFL and went "independent" again.

The CIO union polled a large vote in an election won by the "independent" union. A merger of the two unions took place, with the CIO workers joining the "independent" union. In there they fought for making the "independent" union truly representative of the workers' demands. But they had to fight Fisher and Pachler and their friends.

Since 1938, under the leadership of these "model" officers, Fisher and Pachler, the number of workers in Consolidated-Edison has dropped from 40,000 to 23,000 today, with production speedup and poor wages.

Recently the issue of affiliation to CIO came up again. It was defeated in one referendum and won in the second. Now, fearful that their leadership may be challenged, Fisher, Pachler and their friends, have made anticommunism a condition for entry into the new Utility Workers' union, hoping they thereby can tag a "red" label upon and expel anyone who disagrees with them.

No matter how you praise such an-American features in union constitutions, it is a safe bet that Communists employed in this industry or any other will neither give up their right to earn a living for their families nor their right to their political convictions, guaranteed by the United States Constitution, to satisfy employer-minded union officials. FRED B. BLAIR.

Chairman, Communist Party of Wisconsin.

MONDAY, MAY 1, 1944



The Communist party of Wisconsin held its state convention Sunday at the North Avenue Auditorium. Leaders present include (from left) Fred B. Blair, state chairman; Mortimer Alter, North Side Communist club chairman; Mrs. Blair, county secretary; and Douglas McCain, a sixth ward club committeeman.

Reds' Backing for Roosevelt State Convention Held

The re-election of President Roosevelt was urged in a resolution adopted Sunday at the state convention of the Communist party of Wisconsin at the North Avenue Auditorium, 3120 W. North av. Some 100 delegates attended, said Chairman Fred Bassett Blair.

The Roosevelt resolution, which stated sharply that the Wisconsin primary did not show isolationist strength added, "If the primary showed that labor, the progressive minded people and the independent voters refused to be swayed from their conclusion, which they share with a growing mass of voters, that only through the continuation of the leadership of President Roosevelt can we be assured of maintaining unity for victory and for the solution of the postwar problems in firm collaboration with our allies."

The resolution said that the Wisconsin Communist party would not run party candidates in the state elections but would devote the party's efforts to supporting "win the best" candidates.

The convention approved the proposal of Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party, to elect a national committee.

American Communist Political Education, or some such name to be decided upon at the national convention in New York City May 15 to May 23.

The state convention recessed after the national meeting, with the state group will reconvene to ratify acts of the national meeting and elect state officers.

Proposals of the Communist Party of Milwaukee County in reply
to Mayor Bohn's appeal to all city organizations to send in
proposals for post-war planning in the City of Milwaukee.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF MILWAUKEE
617 N. 2nd Street, Rm. 902
Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin

October 20, 1945

Mayor John L. Bohn
City Hall
Milwaukee 2, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Mayor:

In the full realization that the war is not yet won and that all efforts today must still be centered on the winning of the war, and with the understanding that those steps which are necessary now to strengthen our national unity and democracy in the interest of increasing our war effort, are themselves the best guides to the direction of our post-war planning, we find ourselves fully in agreement with the approach taken by the Mayor in his radio speech of September 11th:

"Planning must bring all the elements of community life into a livable unity where all the people can work and live in the manner which American democracy and liberty coupled with modern science and knowledge make possible. Truly to win the peace, and keep the faith with those who are making the supreme sacrifice, our cities must be better places in which to live after the war."

Necessarily the question of post-war planning in Milwaukee, as throughout our country will center around such problems as the conversion of industry to peace-time production, the utilization of joint planning and supervision by government, industry and Labor to prevent mass unemployment; preparing for participation in the reconstruction of the countries devastated by the war, in the development of new industries made possible by the war-time developments of science and engineering, and by the improvement of the standard of living at home.

These will be problems of first-rate national importance and will be the subjects of broad national policy. For this reason we do not feel that they are intended to fall within the scope of this city conference at the present time. We limit ourselves, therefore, to questions concerning specific plans for the city as such, in the immediate post-war period.

Principles

In further support of the Mayor's statement of creating in our city "a livable unity" in the spirit of American democracy, we urge that in all plans and activities of post-war construction:

1. All discrimination and segregation against Negroes, Jews, or other minorities should be eliminated.
2. The city should declare to be contrary to public policy any attempt to withdraw from Negroes the advances they have made in greater employment in industry.
3. The city should recognize the changes in the position of women as well as the great contributions they have made to our industrial production during their critical period, and should declare to be contrary to public policy any attempt to force women out of industry.
4. The city should likewise give full recognition to the increased and valuable role of Organized Labor in all spheres of public life.

Housing

Unquestionably the most critical demand upon the city's capacity for planning and improvement, is housing. While general improvements in the scandalous housing situation may have to await the post-war period, as much as possible must be done NOW to relieve the specially critical situation in the Sixth Ward. Steps should be taken at once to break through whatever bottlenecks exist (re-zoning, etc.), to make full use immediately of all available priorities for housing construction in the Sixth Ward. In addition, pending the period when more basic improvement will become possible, steps should be taken to assure that landlords will perform adequate repairs and conform to the requirements of the Building Code, at least in the Sixth ward.

In the post-war period, priority should still be given to the rehabilitation of the Sixth Ward, together with a plan for the elimination of sub-standard housing throughout the city. In these points we are in agreement with the various other bodies that have expressed their insistence that all bottlenecks be cleared that have stood in the way of cleaning up a housing situation that even before the war was one of the worst in the country.

Traffic

Of the various projects for beautifying the city and improving traffic, we feel that precedence should be given to

Completion of the Lake Shore Drive,

Construction of an under-pass at 5th, 6th, Clybourn and St. Paul where heavy traffic, including the North Shore Railroad, the Interurban, east and west trucking and cars, and cross viaduct traffic, all mingle in confusion with the North Shore streetcar tracks on Clybourn and the Milwaukee Railroad tracks at Clybourn and 5th,

Creation of better direct street-car and bus connections cross-town, and home-to-factory routes: in particular a north and south line on 20th Street and in the neighborhood of 60th Street.

Air Transportation

We are in agreement with the desirability of expansion of Milwaukee's airport and airline facilities.

Health, Child Care and Education *

Milwaukee has only one Isolation Hospital for contagious diseases, which at times is grossly overcrowded. At least one additional hospital is a minimum and immediate requirement.

The National leaders of our war effort have repeatedly called for greater employment of women in industry and have expressed their alarm over the percentage of women dropping out of war plant work. The main cause for this is the continued failure of many industrial communities, such as Milwaukee, to provide for an adequate system of day nurseries for children. Both for the needs of the war effort and in the belief that employment of women in industry has come to stay, we recommend that the city shall bring itself up to date on this essential requirement and provide for an adequate system of day nurseries.

Bearing in mind that the demands and necessities for higher education will be further increased after the war, the city should take up with the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin, the question of developing the Milwaukee Extension Department into a fully developed University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee.

Cultural

To provide for the greater cultural development and enjoyment of the people of our city, and to advance the stature of Milwaukee amongst the cities of our country, we recommend:

The enlargement of the Milwaukee Public Library to include the entire present building, with a corresponding expansion of its collection of books and services;

The construction of an entirely new Museum building and the corresponding expansion of its exhibits and services;

The construction of a Civic Theatre and Concert Hall building;

Sponsorship and encouragement to the development of a Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra;

Construction of a Municipal Stadium with steps to be taken to secure an American League Baseball franchise for Milwaukee, which would place Milwaukee immediately on a higher level in the whole sports world.

* Proposals dealing with schools, social centers, etc., are not included in this document as schools, social centers are not under the jurisdiction of the City government, but of the School Board.

Financing

It seems fairly obvious that the scope of planning as outlined in the Mayor's address would constitute only wishful thinking if it is to be cramped into the limits of an expenditure of only 20 million dollars in the course of six years. While Milwaukee's status as to relative freedom from debt is praiseworthy, nevertheless the desire to maintain such a debt status should not be allowed to become a bottleneck around the city's growth. All solvent businesses do not hesitate to use credit extensively for expansion. The city cannot avoid the use of borrowing and should not hesitate to do so in periods where the city has to adjust itself to expanding needs for a coming period. For this reason we suggest that financing cannot be limited to the sum mentioned spread over a period of six years.

Therefore, we recommend the following:

1. The use of self-liquidating bond issues for all enterprises where this is possible.
2. The reversal of the policy of refusing Federal assistance. It is this policy which was responsible for the failure to set up a Housing Authority and secure Federal aid for housing in the past, before there was any shortage of materials. This policy was also responsible for the failure to utilize the Lanham Act for the provision of day nurseries, etc.. With the closely connected national life of the present day, it is natural and proper that cities should receive Federal assistance in accordance with the nation-wide programs which are adopted for the solution of nation-wide problems. The city should avail itself of the fullest possible Federal assistance that may be provided in the post-war period.
3. Milwaukee cannot grow and improve if the big accumulations of wealth in the city neither make bequests to the city, nor return adequate taxes to the City of Milwaukee. Consideration should therefore be given to amending the state income tax and utility tax laws so that rebates to all towns and municipalities within a county should be apportioned on a population basis. Consideration should also be given to increasing rates on property above the residential level.

In conclusion, we wish to stress that even from the angle of financing, all questions of city planning are directly tied up with the question of the quickest possible victory in the war. The quicker we throw our full military forces into the attack and destruction of the Axis forces, the more certain will be our victory, the more effective and lasting will be our national unity, and the smaller will be the country's financial and economic problems in the post-war period.

Very truly yours,

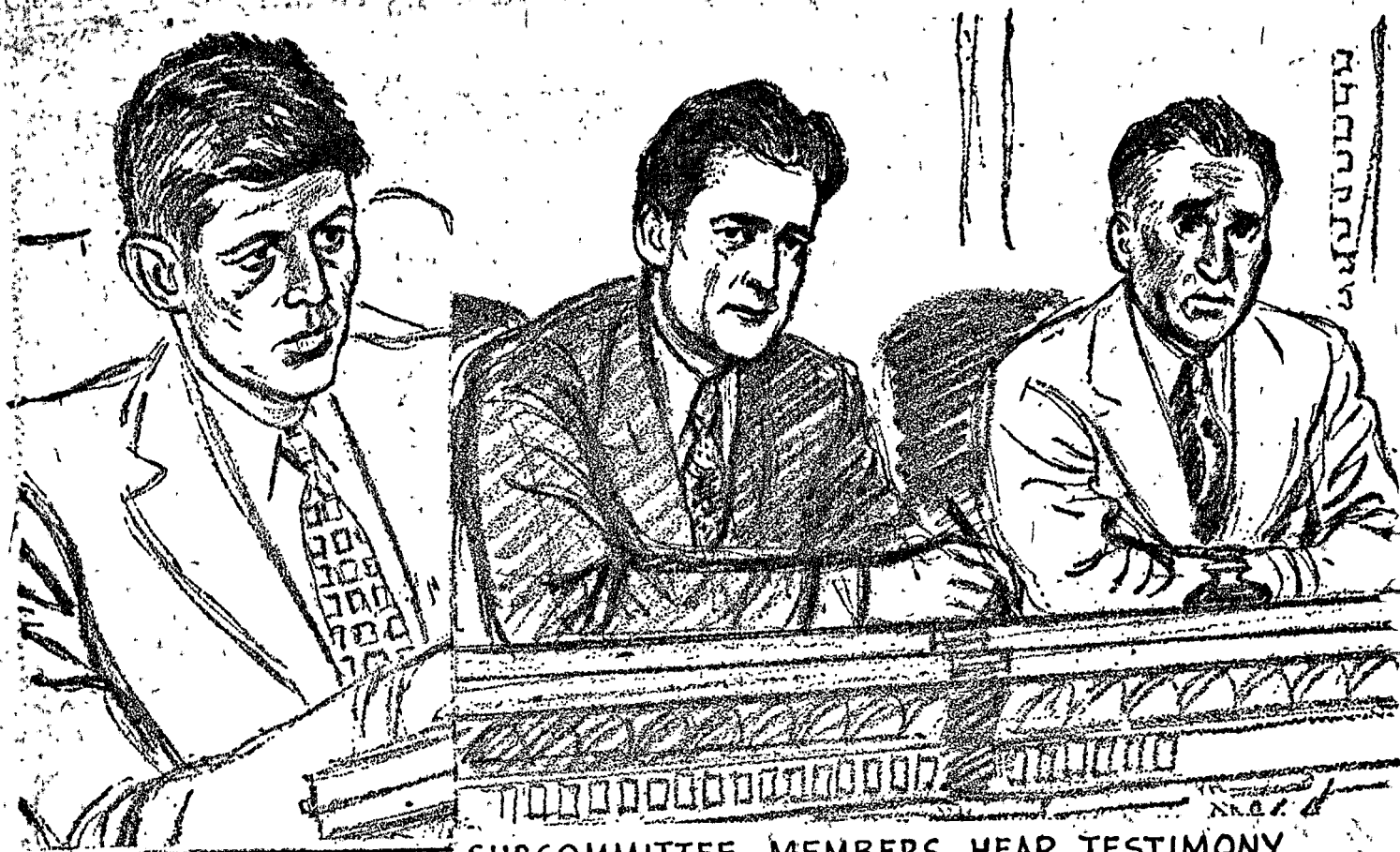
Elizabeth Blair

Elizabeth Blair,
Milwaukee County Secretary
Communist Party

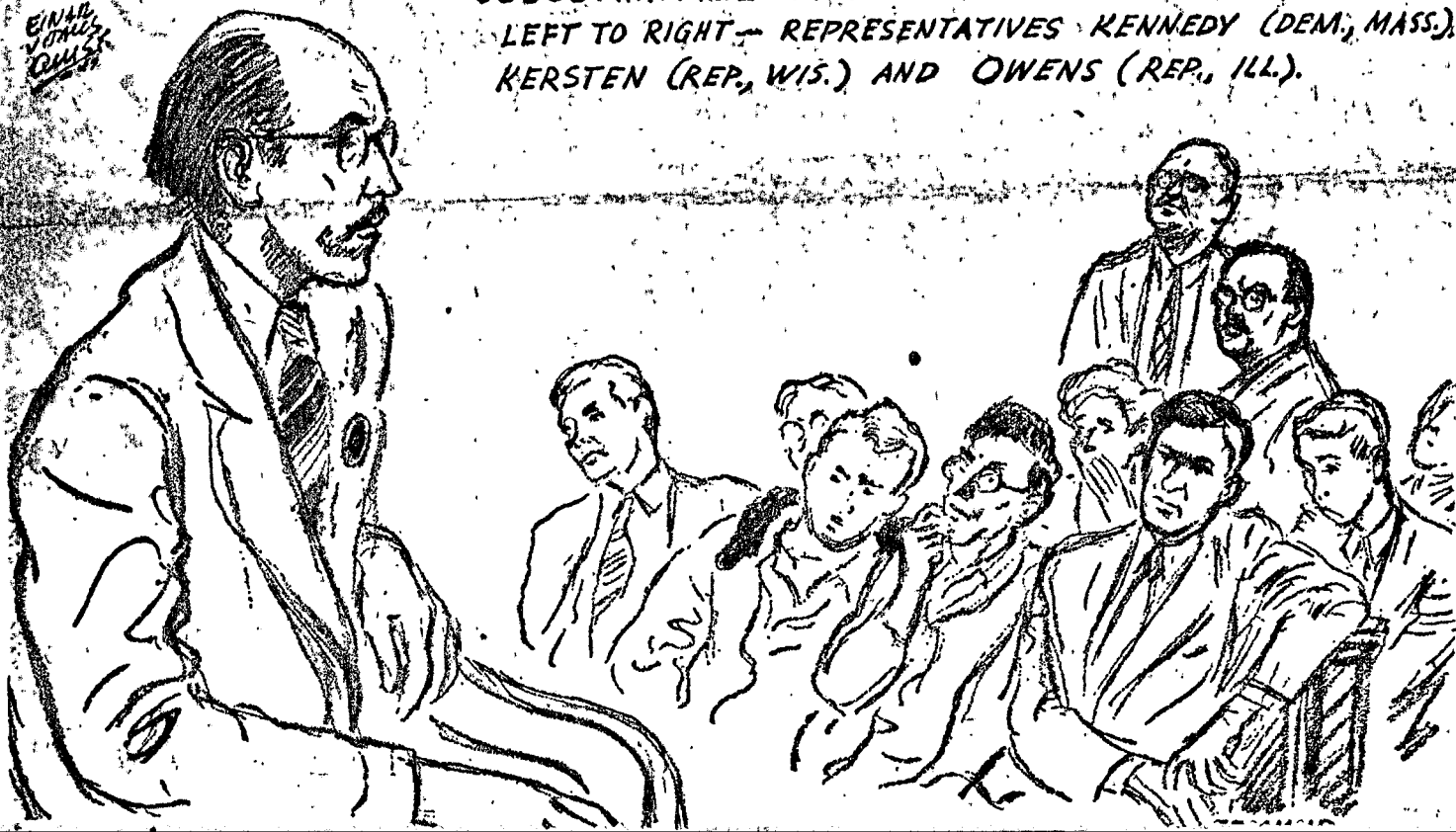
House Subcommittee Ends Hearing Here



Youthful Owen Lambert, who ran for state assembly as a Communist, testifies



SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS HEAR TESTIMONY
LEFT TO RIGHT— REPRESENTATIVES KENNEDY (DEM., MASS.),
KERSTEN (REP., WIS.) AND OWENS (REP., ILL.).





LINUS LINDBERG
248'S TREASURER,
SPENT MOST TIME IN
WITNESS CHAIR

SPECTATORS

EDMUND BOBROWICZ



FRED BLAIR



Ex-Communist Farrell Schnering said: 'Red', in pointing out some local labor figures.

Milwaukee hearings of the house labor subcommittee wound up Wednesday and its members returned to Washington, saying they would study testimony to decide if perjury charges should be filed against Harold Christoffel and Robert Buse, leaders of

the Allis-Chalmers Local 248 of the United Automobile Workers (CIO). The picture strips by Journal photographers are of two of Wednesday's chief witnesses. The sketches are by Einar V. Quist, Journal artist.

A U
wer
net
exp

1-- Biographical Data--

I was born Oct. 4, 1906 in Berlin, Wis. My father and mother were both of French-Canadian extraction. My mother, Mary Bassett Blair, was born at Fargoville, a now-extinct village, located about 7 miles north-west of Berlin. Her father and mother were born and raised near Fargoville. Her grandfather Bassett (originally Bassette in the French spelling) as well as her grandmother (maiden name Morse) came with their parents from New York when they were children. The Morases had lived near Salem, New York. Her mother's maiden name Cluey (a corruption of Cloutier or Clouquier) was born also near Fargoville. The origin of the parents of Grandmother Cluey is unknown to me, but they both spoke French. Family names on this side of the family included Gagnon, Riviera, and Le Mieux. All of my mother's ancestors were frontier small farmers, and workers.

My father was born at Fairbault, Minnesota. His parents were also backwoods people. His mother's father, named Coutu, was a man who lived to 105. Born on board ship when his parents came over from Alsace Lorraine about the time of the French Revolution, old Coutu served as a cabin boy on the Great Lakes at the age of 7 years, fought on the British side in the War of 1812, lived most of his life in the woods, trapping and trading with the Indians. The

feats of strength of old Coutu were legendary among French-Canadians in upper Michigan and Minnesota a hundred years ago.

The original spelling of my father's name was Blais, a family name that is very common in Canada and Minnesota. The name became corrupted to Blair among English-speaking people. There is a legend in the family that the first Blais were Huguenots, a father and two sons, who fled France in a "chaloupe" or river boat, and came in that small craft to Canada after the mother and all the rest of the children were murdered by fanatical Catholics. The legend is that the three had gone to Paris for supplies. Returning in the chaloupe down the Seine, they found their home burned and the family killed. The story has it that they settled in Canada, where the sons married Catholics and the descendants became Catholic. My father claimed that both his parents' ancestors had left Canada because they couldn't make a living on the small strips of land they farmed in Quebec along the St. Lawrence River. They were fleeing the semi-feudal agricultural system of Quebec.

Great-grandfather Coutu visited Wisconsin yearly in the fur trade while the state was still dominated by the British, though nominally in the Northwest Territory. The fur-traders took six months for their canoe trips from Montreal, around the Great Lakes, down through Minnesota, and up the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers to Green Bay.

Living in French-American communities, all my ancestors spoke French instead of English, considering English-speaking people sort of "foreigners" and "interlopers." What little education they had was in parochial schools in the French language. My three older brothers spoke French before they spoke English. It was not till the first part of this century that our family began to use English as their language--all the younger children know no other language than English.

My mother's mother died when she was 12 years old, leaving my mother the responsibility of caring for her younger brothers and sisters. This cut her schooling short. I believe she went as far as eighth grade. My father had only 3 years of schooling in a French parochial Catholic school. At the age of 8 years he was kicked out of his father's school.

hood, my father, rightly or wrongly, became bitter towards the Catholic church, reasoning: "There must be something wrong with a doctrine which will allow a respected church member to treat his children that way."

We were a family of eleven children, nine of whom are still living. There were six girls and five boys. My father was a skilled worker—a stationary engineer (fancy name for fireman and watchman)—but his wages were insufficient so my mother had to supplement his income by taking in washing for a number of years till the older boys began to work. My three older brothers got through eighth grade and then became apprentices at the ages of 13 or 14. The oldest learned to be a blacksmith; the next two became machinists. Each served at least three year apprenticeship. The oldest served his apprenticeship at the See Line shops in North Fond du Lac, Wis.; the other two served theirs at the Giddings and Lewis factory in Fond du Lac. The seven younger children all completed high school, three of them learning stenography and typing, and two of them becoming registered nurses. My younger brother is a semi-skilled machinist.

All of the children started work in their early teens during summer vacations—those who finished high school, that is.

My oldest brother, Lawrence, was drafted in July 1918, and died of the flu in Camp Hancock, Georgia, on the eve of embarkation in October. He was a sergeant in a machine gun company. Though our family was strongly pro-Ally, or, rather, anti-German—the sympathies with France were very strong even after two hundred years in America—yet there was a strong anti-militarist sentiment in our family. The death of our brother whom we idolized made a strong impression on all of us.

I personally began work during summer vacations at the age of 10, weeding gardens etc. The first regular job I had was in 1919 at the age of 12 when I worked as a water boy on a construction gang laying a concrete highway. My wage was 10¢ an hour for a ten hour day. The next summer, working on a building, I got \$2.25 an hour for a 10 hour day.

In 1920 our family moved onto a worn-out sand and gravel farm in Waushara County, Wisconsin, near Wautoma. We had become, for the first time in the history of the family, able to have a little money ahead because of the insurance left by my brother who died in the army. We had bought a house in Fond du Lac, and had ~~accumulated~~ about a thousand dollars equity in it—the lifetime accumulations of my parents. We traded even for an 80 acre farm, having a two thousand dollar mortgage on it, which my father increased to \$5,500 by buying another forty acres for \$1,500 and borrowing the money for it.

On the farm we had three seasons of drought. Our yearly income, with four men and boys, and my mother working, with the younger children helping, averaged a gross of \$750. We couldn't pay the interest on the mortgages, let alone any principle. The man who held the mortgage was a longshore worker in Chicago, who slaved hard to get a little money which he lent out on farms. He foreclosed on us and a number of others in the territory; then had so much land to pay taxes on that he couldn't keep up himself, and died impoverished in an insane asylum. The three years on the farm, without any conveniences, were so hard on my mother that she nearly lost her health. When my father wanted to try it again, all the kids voted him down because of mother's health, so we quit farming. The older brother and sister went to the larger cities, while my parents moved with the five younger children to Red Granite, Wis., a small quarry town. There we got a house on time payment (value \$700) from one of my mother's cousins, and settled.

Having completed High School at Wautoma, and being too young to work in the quarries because of the state law prohibiting hiring of anyone under 18,

I went to Fond du Lac to get employment. Though I was only 17, I was hired at the Hyaping Leather Co. because I'd finished high school, and was considered then eligible for full time employment. I worked there for 14 months in the sorting room. Wages were 40¢ an hour for a 10 hour day. Towards the end of 1924 they began to lay off and cut wages. After I was cut to 37¢ an hour, I quit, early in 1925.

In the tannery I first became acquainted with social thinking and the effects of social legislation on the workers. The bosses were on the lookout to prevent any talk of unionism, or socialism. They even circulated a petition on the 8 hour day legislation that La Follette was trying to get through the legislature. I was almost the only one who signed in favor of the 8 hour day; the others were talked into signing against it on the grounds that a reduction from 10 hours would mean a cut in pay.

In the tannery I saw my first live Communists-- several representatives of the Soviet government who came to inspect a million dollar order of hides. None of us had a chance to talk to any of them--we merely gawked at them. We knew, however, that the company was trying to pull a fast one on those Russians by rushing the hides through without putting them through all necessary operations. We felt secretly pleased when the Soviet inspectors caught this trickery and refused to take the hides unless they were re-processed. We also were amused at the fear shown by a young Russian White Guard who was the son of a wealthy Moscow tannery owner expropriated by the Revolution. This wealthy Russian capitalist family had moved to Berlin, and had sent this young scion to our tannery to learn the ins and outs of the business. The youth ducked around among the piles of hides and peered at the "Bolsheviks" like a rat spying on a cat. All the workers found this amusing, though none of us knew anything about Communism-- and few anything about trade unionism.

The workers in that factory were largely men who had known nothing else most of their lives. Our foreman had worked there 40 years, starting at the age of 7 or 8. The "Bolsheviks" asked him how long he'd worked there, and when he told them, asked him how much he made. He answered "55¢ an hour." They told him he ought to own the place after so many years, which nettled him, but amused the workers.

In 1924 during the summer the Ku Klux Klan was at its height, holding large meetings in a big tent on the edge of town. Though we had been baptised Catholic, our family had left the church when we were young, and we had considered ourselves Congregationalists. I had belonged to the Boy Scout troop at the Fond du Lac Congregational church.

A large number of the tannery and machine shop Protestant workers went down to the meeting one night. My brother and I went along with some friends. The emphasis of the speakers was anti-Catholic and anti-capitalist. I joined up, paying \$5; but my older brother was skeptical. Another brother, older yet, had already joined up. We attended only two meetings of the Klan. At the first meeting I got in an argument with the Kleagle by defending Darwin's theory of evolution. At the second meeting my oldest brother got in an argument with the Superintendent of the railway shops and one of our neighbors by proposing that parades should be held without hoods. In both cases the arbitrary and dictatorial manner of the officers roused resentment among a large proportion of those present. Meanwhile, thinking we were good Americans and ~~fanning~~ believing the Klan was preaching Americanism, we had long discussions in the shops on the Klan's program. Many of our Catholic and foreign born friends wanted to join too, considering themselves also good Americans. The anti-Negro and anti-Semitic points in the Klan program repelled us. As a result, both my brother and I quit after the second meeting. The Klan folded

up in Fond du Lac shortly after that. Though they hounded us through the mails for dues, we ignored them, and after 1925 they didn't bother any more.

In 1925 the Klan became very active in Red Granite, where I had gone to work in the quarries during the summer. My father and I opposed it strongly, but nevertheless my younger brother and youngest sister were carried away by the fever and joined against our advice. In Red Granite the Klan spread hatred between the Catholics and Protestants, and against the foreign born, particularly the Finnish-Americans who were considered "Communists"--a hatred that destroyed the already weak unions in the quarries, and continued for many years.

In politics, our family had been traditionally Republican, from before the Civil War. My father was a great admirer of Theodore Roosevelt, and was quite jingoistic, though opposed to anti-Semitism and anti-Negroism. One of the factors that brought us temporarily to the Klan was the story that the Republican Governor Fred Zimmerman was a member of the organization. During the 1912 campaign, my father had supported Taft, but my brothers had gone for Roosevelt. In 1916 we all supported Hughes; in 1920, Harding; in 1924, Coolidge. In 1928 at a matter of course we were in favor of Hoover at first.

Political arguments and religious arguments were always going on fiercely at our house. Many of our relatives were Polish, and supported Democrats. All of them were Catholic, while our family was drifting into free-thought. The arguments were hot but friendly and didn't interfere with card games or drinking beer. Such papers as the "Message" and "Yellow Jacket" were circulated a lot by my older brothers. The only thing all agreed on was the dictum of my grandfather Bassett: "Some day there will be the biggest war of all, and that will be between the rich and the poor."

Father had been a member of the Knights of Labor in his youth. In later years he had joined a couple AFL unions which had been broken up by scamps who had run off with the treasuries. This made him a confirmed apostle of the Open Shop. My brothers, however, favored labor unions. This added another bit of spice to the arguments at home. Some of my uncles from Red Granite, which had a strong IWW movement, and Minnesota, also favored unions.

In the four summers I spent working in the stone-quarries at Red Granite I came into contact with people of twenty different nationalities. These men had travelled a lot. The paving cutters were well-organized; so were the stone cutters, and the drillers. Their pay was considerably above our 40¢ an hour; they worked 8 hours a day while we worked 10 hours and sometimes as high as 14. There was much discussion of Socialism there, especially among the Scandinavian, Welsh, ~~British~~ English, and Scottish workers. There I first heard of Communism. In 1924 I found a Communist leaflet on our front porch, greeting May Day. For several nights we watched with a shotgun for the "subversives" who were distributing such literature. In the quarry I met a Bulgarian member of the Socialist Labor Party who told me scornfully about the Communists and the Daily Worker. He advised me to read it once in awhile, but get the "Weekly People."

My mental horizon was widened considerably by contact with these people from all over Europe. I had long decided to work till I saved up enough money to go to college. My father had advised me not to learn a trade, because it would put me in a rut. He wanted me to be a lawyer. I therefore considered these years of working in the tannery and stone quarries as merely preliminary to a future professional career.

Meanwhile, I had developed an interest in poetry, from reading Milton's Paradise Lost. I saved my money, not wasting anyth

any on wine, woman or song, fully believing that I could become wealthy some day in that fashion. I bought insurance policies, and invested in stocks--one or two shares--read books, tried writing poetry, and was generally considered a "good boy", with "a future." During the winter months when the quarries were shut down, I went elsewhere to work. In the fall of 1925 I went to Milwaukee and worked in a construction job, in a clothing factory, and at Harnischfeger Corporation, where I was a punch-press helper. The following ~~fall~~ I washed dishes at a tuberculosis sanitarium. There, I met one of the members of the State Board of Control who was a friend of Zona Gale. She told me about the forthcoming Experimental College at the University of Wisconsin and advised me to apply for entrance. Both she and a number of doctors at the Sanatorium ~~also~~ encouraged me to continue writing poetry.

After quitting the sanatorium, I went back to the quarries. In the fall of 1927 I applied for entrance to the Experimental College. With the recommendation of Elizabeth Waters, a former teacher at Fond du Lac, and my acquaintance on the Board of Control, I was accepted, and started at the U of W. in 1927.

I had got interested in long distance running in High School, having won several races in my last year at Wautoma. I was also an avid bicycle tourist, when I worked in the tannery I made almost weekly trips 50 miles home to Red Granite to visit my family, often leaving at 4 o'clock on Monday morning to get to work at 7 o'clock in Fond du Lac. After work I would either go on bicycle trips or run a couple miles "to keep in condition."

When I entered at the University I had several ambitions: 1) To learn as much as I could by hard study and discussions with the teachers and students, 2) To get equipped for some profession. 3) To become a champion long-distance runner-- I wanted to run the Marathon! 4) To improve my writing, and become a ~~professional writer~~ good poet. Insofar as I had any perspective, it was to make writing my life-work. However, I already saw that I'd never make a living writing the way I wanted to, so I expected to become a teacher in a high school or college as a means of making a living so I could write. I had been approached earlier by one politician who urged me to apply for the local postmaster's job in Red Granite, but I didn't feel I could qualify. I was too green to know that such jobs are handed out as patronage. Also, another would-be politician, a school principal, had urged me to become a rural school teacher, stating I might in the future get a chance to run for assembly on the Democratic ticket. All that was far above my head in those days.

Here at the University I found myself running into ideas I never knew existed. The students at the Experimental College were as a whole more advanced than ordinary students. Some were older than most students. There were talented people, some who had already made a little mark in their fields. Many of them were from wealthy families; many were of different national origins; many were from parts of the country, like the South, the far west, and New York, which seemed like foreign lands to a greenhorn like me.

The first year we studied ancient Greece. I found no limits on my desire to study. I had decided I wouldn't work after school hours--but would live on my savings. By the end of the second semester my \$600 was spent and I had to borrow money. I paid that back through what I saved during the summer of 1928. I applied for a Zona Gale Scholarship, and received it on the strength of my poetry--which by this time made a pile of manuscript about a foot high.

In the second year of the Experimental College, I ran into debt again, despite the help given by the scholarship. That debt I paid off quickly the

summer of 1929.

At the University I found that I had to revise my views of society fundamentally. I quickly learned enough about the petty politics that govern the lives of University Professors so that I didn't want to pen myself in the prison where teachers spend their years. None of the professions appealed to me. I found that my own background and that of my family had engendered basic reactions to the world that were sharply at variance with the atmosphere of University life. Where I had spent the first year in a sort of a happy dream, the second year seemed like a prison.

I found myself questioning the judgements and things taught by my professors, and increasingly got into arguments over interpretations of fact. Though I considered myself a Republican, I found that I didn't see eye to eye with the other Republicans there. It wasn't long before I was called a Communist, though I didn't know any Communists then. I had met a couple people who were called Communists, but considered them to be some sort of mental freaks.

In keeping with our family's traditional love for discussion, I was moved to join other students in a free speech fight when Glenn Frank, whom I worshipped as a great liberal and Republican, banned Mrs. Bertrand Russell from speaking on the campus. Four of us students banded together, enlisted the help of many others, and arranged a meeting for her. Only the kindly assistance of Ernest Meyer, then writing for the Capital Times, saved us from being expelled from school. Glenn Frank cancelled a national speaking tour to rush back to Madison and discipline us, only to find out he couldn't do anything because Meyer ~~was~~ said he was sponsoring the meeting.

This ~~meeting~~ experience with Glenn Frank was very disillusioning to me. Later that year, I was very much aroused by the brutal sentence given David Gordon for writing a poem which appeared in the Daily Worker. I took part in helping organize a ~~defense~~ meeting for his defense.

Before the end of the first year I was already getting interested in politics. I became acquainted with some Socialists and joined the League for Industrial Democracy. I considered myself, though a Republican, more akin to the Socialists. In the course of working with the Socialists, and La Follette Progressive students, I got acquainted first hand with their dirty politics and became disgusted with them.

~~Later that year~~ The Socialists convinced me that the Communists were boring from within a certain University Club, that the Communists were absolutely unscrupulous, using any means to achieve their ends, that therefore it was proper to use any means to defeat the Communists. I thought ~~they~~ they were right, and in my capacity as secretary of this loosely-formed club, readily assented to the Socialists' proposals to addredit people who had never been members in order to vote down the Communists. For this the Communists rightly denounced me as a conniver at fraudulent election practices, but my conscience was clear, for I was convinced they were the enemies of democracy, were unscrupulous, and had to be defeated by any means, however foul, ~~in~~ order to keep them from corrupting the organization and using it for their forum.

However, I learned about the Tom Mooney case, and was convinced of his innocence. When I wanted the Socialists to protest and demand his freedom, they balked, saying that would be a "Communist" action. This was in the second year at school.

By this time I was on the varsity cross country team and had many friends

among the athletes, football players, wrestlers, boxers, etc. The Socialists told me there was going to be an election meeting and the Communists were out to capture the organization. They urged me to bring my athlete friends down to defend the fort. I agreed.

However, at the meeting, when a resolution came up early to call for the freedom of Tom Mooney and the Socialists ~~undemocratically~~ tried to stifle debate, while the Communists supported the proposal, I became very angry at the Socialists. With the aid of my friends, the athletes, we removed all the Socialists from office, passed the resolution. The Socialists loudly accused me of double-crossing them and aiding the Communists. The Communists were elated. I did not consider myself a Communist, but a Republican. However, I did want to do something about Tom Mooney, and was definitely finished with the Socialists from then on.

My political ideas were in rapid flux in the fall of 1928. I had taken it for granted that I would vote for Hoover. But my experience with the Ku Klux Klan had made me resentful of any appeals to ~~racial~~ prejudice. When the attacks were made on Al Smith for being Catholic, although I had no use for Catholicism, I felt impelled to sympathize with Al Smith's candidacy, to demonstrate that I opposed injection of prejudice into the campaign. There were hot discussions on the campus. These were several Communists that I knew by this time. I still considered myself a Republican. I intended to vote for Al Smith as a protest against prejudice. However, in the interests of fair play, I consented to serve on a Foster for President Committee to guarantee that this minority candidate would get a hearing. I was elected secretary. Feeling an obligation to do something to bring Foster's program forward, I agreed to help distribute leaflets announcing a Communist meeting-- making clear to the Communists that I didn't accept their program, even opposed it, and would vote for Al Smith.

I was amazed, shocked, and hurt by the reaction I got from some of the teachers, and our coach, when they saw me distribute those leaflets. It made me quite angry to be called a "Communist" when I was doing it in the interests of free speech and assembly. I believed strongly in the "sifting and winnowing" doctrine emblazoned on the tablet Before Bascom Hall.

Since I was ~~examined~~ a Republican, I was asked to speak for Hoover at a symposium in the Experimental College. Other students were assigned to speak for Al Smith, Norman Thomas, and William Z. Foster. I conscientiously studied the platforms of all four candidates, so that I could extoll those of Hoover and answer the arguments of the others. I was startled to find that Foster's program was the best, and Hoover's the worst. By this time I had no use for the Socialists any more. So I gave a very poor presentation of Mr. Hoover's program. I stated frankly that it was my opinion that Foster had the best program, and Hoover's the worst; that if one were honest he'd have to vote for Foster; that if ~~if~~ one wanted to vote for a winner he should vote for either Hoover or Smith; that one ought to vote for Smith as a protest against anti-Catholicism; that probably Hoover would win, so that's where one's vote should be cast to be on the winning side.

That speech marked the end of my even calling myself a Republican. The Republicans called me a double-crosser. I didn't see it. As a matter of fact, by the time November came around I was convinced I would vote for Foster; but when I got in the polls I cast my vote for Al Smith.

The argument I had with the track coach over distributing leaflets for Foster made me so angry I quit the track team. I continued running every day, but got no credit for it because I was not registered for physical education.

My reaction was anarchistic and individualistic in the extreme. I was opposed to any compulsion for either ROTC or physical education, believing such things should be voluntary.

In the second semester of the second year my professors were calling me Communist consistently. I was arguing fiercely with the Communists on all points of their program. In the course of these arguments, I found myself losing consistently. I agreed that there was something radically wrong with society and a change was needed. I couldn't see their contention that the working class was the class which would emancipate society. It seemed to me the farmers were the basic class, since they raised the food. The questions of dictatorship vs. democracy; idealism vs. materialism; freedom versus "regimentation"; all these matters were threshed out.

The last straw came in a philosophy class when a professor opposed the a rise in the price of haircuts asked by Madison barbers, and I favored it, saying: "Barbers have to eat too!" The professor flew into a passion and said: "That's the trouble with you Communists! You only think of the workers; you don't care what happens to the consumers." Shocked, I retorted: "But the workers are consumers, too!" This little by-play did more than any single other incident to wake me up to changes that were going on in my thinking. I realized that now I was definitely considered a Communist, with all the consequences that would mean. I decided it was time I began to find out seriously what Communism was.

The next few months I began to ask my Communist friends questions with less of an antagonism to their outlook. I decided definitely to leave school for a couple years to clear up my thinking, and began to look with longing on my life as a worker before, which was relatively peaceful compared to this hectic University life. Some professors tried to dissuade me from leaving school, advising me I might think it a temporary recess, but it would become a permanent thing. However, my mind was made up.

Before I left school in June, 1929, Professor Paul Raushenbush, a Socialist and bitter anti-Communist, ~~informed me that the Communist~~ whose advice was always: "Learn about Communism from its enemies." cleaning out his desk for the summer, handed me a copy of Lenin's "Imperialism" and "State and Revolution." "Read them if you want to, but don't believe them," he suggested.

During the summer of 1929, I started reading these works of Lenin. I also read Eleanor Aveling's pamphlet "The People's Marx". These works, especially "Imperialism" clinched matters for me. "Imperialism" showed me clearly that Communism was not a visionary dream to be realized a hundred years from now, but a matter of our own time. Marx's writings explained a problem my brothers and I had argued for years: "Where does profit come from?" It is difficult to describe the effect of those writings on my thinking. After two years of mental confusion amounting almost to agony at some times, here was writing crystal clear and illuminating in the extreme. My ~~brother~~ older brother and I read the works together. We both said: "Why, this is exactly the way we've been thinking all our lives!" The world began to make some sense.

One thing bothered us: "Isn't this too much for the average worker to understand? Isn't this something removed from the average workers' experience?" We were not free from a feeling of superiority, unfortunately. That question was answered for us when the Milwaukee Communists distributed shop papers at the Harnischfeger plant. I was working as a freight handler on the railroads, and my brother was at Harnischfegers. These shop papers made a sensation at Harnischfegers. They were the main topic of discussion. We were both

The only thing that remained now was the decision as to the time of joining the Communist Party. Incidentally, we both were convinced that an economic crisis was coming, from what we learned of crises in Marx's writings. We decided we'd work for a year, save money, and get ourselves patched up for the big leap. We had notions that joining the Party meant letting ourselves in for the most strenuous type of activity, blacklisting, even jail. My brother had to have a cataract removed from one eye, injured by a piece of steel in a factory; I thought I needed my appendix removed.

When I joined I was working at the Westinghouse Electric Co. light-bulb plant in Milwaukee. We tried to organize a union there. By January, 1930, when the Great Depression was already under way, I was exposed and fired. I took part in the unemployed movement, helping organize the mass meetings and demonstrations which won relief for the unemployed and demolished Hoover's decree that "The American worker is too proud to ask for a dole."

I have been Communist candidate for the following offices: for U.S. Senator in 1938; for Governor of Wisconsin in 1930, 1932, 1940, and 1942. For Congress, 6th District, 1934 and 1948; for Mayor of Milwaukee, 1932, and 1940.

and

I have been writing poems, stories for 25 years. I have published two brochures of poetry: "The Woman Lake and Other Poems" in 1928; and "The Ashes of Six Million Jews" in 1946. A number of my poems have appeared

pen-

in various newspapers, under various names. Among these are the Daily Worker, the Sheboygan Press, the Madison Capital Times, and the Milwaukee Journal. One of my poems "Northeast Passage" was placed in the Congressional Record by Cong. Thaddeus Wasielowski. The Navy Department sent me a letter of thanks for another "The Ballad of Pearl Harbor". The poem "Northeast Passage", besides appearing in the Milwaukee Journal, was ~~widely~~ reprinted in various newspapers, ~~xxx~~ including "The Worker", "The Pilot", organ of the CIO National Maritime Workers Union, the Ashland, Wis. "Press", and brought favorable comment from leaders in the movement for the St. Lawrence waterway.

"The Ashes of Six Million Jews" received favorable comment from leaders in movements against intolerance in many parts of the country, and from various individuals outside the Communist movement.

Besides poetry, I have written articles for the Daily Worker for the past 19 years; Party leaflets, and letters stating the position of the Communist Party to various newspapers, and several articles for the "Communist" and Political Affairs, our national organs.

As one of our Party's spokesmen in Wisconsin, I have appeared frequently before legislative bodies, at conferences and gatherings, and have spoken in most of the larger cities of our state, and in many rural communities.

I became a Communist through my own experience and the experience of my family as workers, and farmers in America, through my patriotism as an American, through struggle to find meaning in our life, to win freedom of thought and action, through study, and through conviction that only Communism can ~~save us~~ save us Americans from chaos and destruction.

The 19 years I have been a member of the Communist Party have been rich in experience. Each year has more deeply confirmed the decision made back in 1929 to join the Communist Party. The rightness and wisdom of that decision is more apparent today than ever. I am profoundly grateful to the Communist Party for what membership in it has taught me, for the tremendous boons it has brought the American people, for the hope it has brought to families like mine, and for the bright future which the imminent victory of its cause will open to America.

A COMMUNIST MAKES REPLY

[617 N. 2nd st., Milwaukee, Feb. 9.] — In your Jan. 4 radio address, speaking of the trial of the 12 Communist leaders, you said: "It would be improper to comment while the matter is before the court." 2-15-49.

As a liberal you should know that in Brooklyn a reactionary judge named Surpless is conniving with the Brooklyn police to prevent distribution of leaflets on the trial for substantially the same reasons you give.

Your position would gag the American people and prevent anyone opposed to the trial from telling the truth about it—that this trial itself, whatever the outcome, destroys all American liberties by allowing courts to rule on legality of ideas.

However, while you refuse to comment on the issues in the case, are you and other liberals going to keep still about the rigged and loaded jury system in New York under which the 12 were indicted and now face trial?

Irrefutable evidence shows that New York juries exclude Jews, Negroes, working people, trade unionists, and people with low incomes. Judge Knox who introduced the system admitted these juries are handpicked, stating: "I cannot do otherwise than admit my guilt. Nevertheless, unless restrained by an authority that I cannot resist, jurors in my district will continue to be hand-picked."

Sen Langer called this system "outrageous and un-American" in the Senate; Cong. Marcantonio attacked it in the house. Demands are pouring in to Cong. Celler, of the house judiciary committee, asking a congressional investigation of the method of jury picking in that district.

On Jan. 31 you said: "The dim outlines of a police state that are appearing here and there in the American scene should have the concern of the American people." You con-

The People 2-15-49-Cap Times

Freedom to Discuss it, and All Will Go Well

demned attacks on academic freedom, Tom Clark's wire-tapping proposals, etc. Good!

Isn't it time that liberals realized that anti-Communism is the means by which the police state is being built? Isn't the "Trial of the 12" the central point of the drive to a police state? [Editor's Note: But the Communists always set up a police state wherever they get control.]

Whatever your answer to these questions, the people of Wisconsin are entitled to know this: Will you speak up against the system of jury picking in New York? Or will you again tell us you think it is "improper"—till the courts rule on it?

Do you propose that all of us should do absolutely nothing about anything till the courts (controlled by the monopolies) tell us whether or not we can do it?—Fred Blair, Vice Chairman, Wisconsin Communist Party.

Labor's Daily, With More Help from Labor, Could Be Needed Spokesman for Mature Labor Movement

FOR MANY YEARS The Capital Times has deplored the status of labor journalism in the United States. It has seemed to us that an organization with some 16 million members has been negligent in not making a more serious effort to present its case to the public.

A great labor movement, such as we have in this country, should have a daily newspaper to act as its spokesman in presenting labor's case to the public, as labor dailies have done in European countries, particularly in England and the Scandinavian countries.

In England the Labor party owns the Daily Herald with a circulation of 2 million. In addition the Daily Mirror, though not owned by the Labor party, takes the party's point of view and has built up the phenomenal circulation of 8 million. In Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Paris and Rome daily papers speak for labor.

BUT IN this country there has been no development that can be remotely compared to labor journalism in Europe. The best job in the field has been done by Labor, the publication of the Railroad Brotherhoods. While it has performed a valuable service and is crammed with important information that union members should have, it is only a four page weekly with a circulation of approximately 900,000.

The most encouraging development in this field came to our attention some months ago with the appearance of a daily labor paper, called Labor's Daily. It is a sprightly, well-edited paper, published at Bettendorf, Iowa, by the International Typographical Union and filled with news of importance to laboring men and liberals. It has on its staff some very competent newspapermen.

Unfortunately, Labor's Daily is not getting the kind of support it needs and deserves from organized labor throughout the country. It has had some tough going, of course, as all beginning publications do. But they have not been of such a serious nature that they could not be overcome with a little more assistance from other labor

Voice of The People

("Let the People Have the Truth and Freedom to Discuss It, and All Will Go Well")

The Mark Twain Bookshop

[Milwaukee, April 3]—Your paper of April 2, printed a letter by Mrs. Georgia Cozzini of Milwaukee carrying some mis-statements about the Mark Twain Bookshop which my wife and I operate at 1010 W. North Ave. in Milwaukee.

The Mark Twain Bookshop is owned solely by Mary Keith Blair. It is operated by her with my help. The policies of the store and everything connected with it are controlled by us. It is a private business venture out of which we hope to make a living. The capital for it is entirely our own.

The Mark Twain Bookshop deals primarily in second hand books. We handle some new books, mainly standard works like Modern Library issues, and some best sellers. We order any books not in stock. We search for out of print books and first editions on any subject. We carry a number of periodicals including The Capital Times and Progressive magazine—our store is one of the few places in Milwaukee where The Capital Times is on sale.

We handle Marxist writings but they make up about five per cent of our stock. We shall continue to carry whatever progressive literature any customers may want.

We are certain that anyone who visits our store and looks over our stock will be convinced that Mrs. Cozzini's statements about us are wrong. To our knowledge she has not yet been in our store and apparently wrote on the basis of erroneous reports—Fred Blair.

Send Southerners To South Africa?

[Antioch, Ill., April 8]—(To "Disgusted" of Milwaukee)—Your illogical opinions regarding the race question, the relative virtues of Southerners, Yankees and Billy Graham should dis-

gust you or anyone who reads your nonsense.

History does not bear you out as to the origin of slave trading. There may have been a few Yankees, as you call them, but other nationals, including English, predominated. That point, however, is of little consequence compared with the truth, which cannot be concealed, that the Southern planters bought the Negroes.

Negroes are found everywhere. They can live in any climate if they are treated fairly and you cannot shift the blame by such a smokescreen. As to the need of Graham's teachings, that is another ridiculous idea. I have no respect for glib orators regardless of their skill. His forte is keeping a lot of people at white heat.

The suggestion of certain lily whites that the Negroes should be shipped to the Northern states cause me to offer a better plan. Strydom, the deeply religious strong man of the Union of South Africa will need all the help he can get if he is to keep the black population under control. Let the punishment of the Southern people fit the crime of their forefathers. Send the gripping whites to Strydom. Away with them—Skeptic.

Marine Vets Thank City's Givers

[Madison, April 7]—The recent Marine Corps live orchid sale in Madison was a huge success. This success was due to the unselfishness and co-operation of the Madison area citizens in purchasing the live orchids used for welfare work in our hospitals.

It is gratifying to know that the error is not for only confirming the truth.

organizations and members.

WE HOPE that for the good of the labor movement and for journalism, which is today so distressingly dominated by the One-Party press, that Labor's Daily will get the support that it needs to help it grow into the kind of a flourishing institution that a mature American labor movement should have.

THE CAPITAL TIMES

Published every afternoon except Sunday and Christmas by Madison Newspapers, Inc., Editorial direction by The Capital Times Company.

WILLIAM T. REYNOLDS, Editor and Publisher

Wausha County, Wis., July 27, 1961
 Ex' Sherr Boy Now One of Top
 Commies in U.S.

The lad lived with his family out in Parker Valley. The farm was four miles from Wautoma.

Mornings, outfitted in a pair of short knickers—more often than not hand-me-downs from an older brother—he would run the entire distance to school in Wautoma. Four miles up the sandy hills and down; then, finally the last mile up the big hill and down around the long curve on Hiway 78, clear into Wautoma high school. He would kick it off quickly and easily, as if that were the only way to travel.

Under his arm there was always a bundle of books, and usually a piece of poetry or composition he had been inspired to set on paper the night before. A friendly, "Hi, Iddo!" was his greeting to school chums as he passed along the way.

When he arrived at school, his heavy chest that housed a pair of stout lungs heaved a few moments under the strain. And then he was ready for classes.

"Not like a deer," they said.

The lad was Carroll Blair. He was 14 years old when his family moved to Wausha County and settled on the old Parker homestead in Parker Valley.

He had completed his sophomore year in Fond du Lac high school at the age of 13. After they settled on the farm in Wausha County, his French Canadian parents kept him out of school a year to help on the farm. After years in the city, they wanted so badly to make good on the farm in order to provide a good life for their ten children.

The family had bought the farm with the insurance money it received after the oldest son—"the favorite of the family"—died of flu on the way to France in the First World War. They were "poor farmers". But the parents figured that if they worked the soil earnestly and with the application of all the family's ingenuity, they could "make a go of it".

That first year in Wautoma wasn't easy for the Blair family. Aside from the fact

that there were endless hours in the fields and barns, they were French Canadians and not immediately accepted into the social life of the predominantly German and Scandinavian families of the area.

Although he was only 15 when he entered his junior year at WHS, and had missed the year of schooling before, young Carroll Blair immediately forged to the head of his class.

His knowledge of books and his interest in poetry made him the obvious selection for captain of the school's Literary Society. He was also picked as Literary Editor for school publications.

Then in the spring of 1923, Wautoma high school started a track team. There was no equipment, so the only events the Orange and Black could enter in were, according to the WHS annual of 1923, "the jumps and the runs".

For "the runs" the school put its money on the short, stocky, big-chested knickers who clipped off the miles.

Parker Valley and Wautoma each day "like a deer".

When the track team went to Waupaca that spring, Carroll Blair carried the school colors in the half-mile, the mile and the two-mile events. He won them all—all in the same afternoon—and he still wasn't panting.

As one of the former classmates recalls, "He would run the mile and at the finish the other boys who hadn't dropped out along the way were all falling in the dirt gasping for breath. But Carroll, sometimes he would go around again just for the fun of it."

In his classes, the lowest grade Carroll Blair ever scored at WHS was a 93. All his other grades were 96 or 97, in history, physics and English, his best studies. His transfer grades from Fond du Lac were all "excellent" or "good".

When the class of 1923 was graduated, Carroll Blair was picked as Salutatorian. He was "just a point or so" behind Carmen Johnson who was Valedictorian.

When he made his address that night



CARROLL BLAIR

"DEDICATED TO COMMUNISM"

the spunky young lad from Parker Valley stepped up before the audience in the first pair of long pants he ever owned.

The school annual that year voted Carroll Blair the "most studious boy" in school. But the little words written under his picture have come to haunt the anonymous author who penned them.

Under his picture in the annual is inscribed:

"His righteous words
 we never can doubt,
 For he always knows
 what he's talking about."

For the same Carroll Blair grew up to be the most important Communist in Wisconsin and one of the most important Communists in the whole United States by virtue of his elevation to the National Committee of the Communist Party.

Wautoma and Wausha County had all

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

(Continued From Page 1)

but forgotten about Carroll Blair until last week that big advertisement for the Communist Party appeared in the Oshkosh Northwestern. It ran under the name "Fred B. Blair."

That name struck a chord of familiarity in the mind of an old schoolmate who remembered a little bit about Carroll Blair and what became of him.

The Argus editor went to Milwaukee over the weekend to check the record of Carroll Blair. This is the story of Carroll Blair, as garnered from the files of Milwaukee newspapers, persons who knew him and a personal interview with the man himself.

He had been urged by "Professor DaFoe", as he and others called the man who was superintendent at Wautoma then, to enroll in the university. To do so he went to work at the quarry in Redgranite. Then he worked another year at a tannery in Fond du Lac and other jobs wherever he could find them.

After a few years work he had saved a "couple hundred dollars" and was granted a Zona Gale scholarship to the UW. By the end of his second year at the university, the nation was in the depths of depression. Unemployment was widespread. Communists were making hay in the sunshine of discontent.

Young Carroll Blair, troubled by the problems of society at the time, saw the rainbow of salvation in the preachings of the Communist soap boxers.

On March 6, 1930, there was a Communist rally in Milwaukee. Carroll Blair was on the scene. What took place in Milwaukee that day became known in history as "the Haymarket Square Riot".

Carroll Blair was arrested in the melee.

When taken to the jail, he gave the police the name "Fred Bassett". Later, the Milwaukee newspapers turned up the fact that Fred Bassett was the same Carroll Blair who had gotten a Zona Gale scholarship to the university.

At his trial, Carroll Blair admitted grabbing a policeman's billy club and clubbing another policeman over the head with it from

behind.

Unrepentant, Blair declared on the witness stand: "I'm only sorry I didn't hit him harder—like he was hitting the other man."

For his violence, Blair was sentenced to a year in prison—the stiffest sentence the judge meted out to a half-dozen Communists who were involved in that riot. At the time of the riot, Blair had been living at Communist Party headquarters in Milwaukee.

That winter, when WHS alumni were planning their annual Christmas-time reunion, Carroll Blair received an invitation to join his old classmates at the banquet. In his reply, (re-printed in full elsewhere on this page) Blair wrote:

"Banquets are not for workers in these days of capitalism! You must banquet without me, not only now, but so long as capitalism lasts. But when we workers have destroyed this system and have started the construction of the Socialist world, then I shall banquet in Wautoma—then the workers will banquet all over."

After the riot, Milwaukee newspapermen contacted Carroll's parents in Redgranite. (They had lost the farm by then.) They refused to discuss their son. But a 20-year-old sister was quoted as saying:

"What Carroll does is his business. We are glad he has the courage to fight for his convictions."

And a Dr. R. L. Bullis of Redgranite was quoted: "Carroll is a sportsman and a bright boy. There isn't a soul in Redgranite who will say a word against him."

During his trial, Carroll Blair told reporters he adopted the name Fred Bassett because he wanted to save his family and friends any retaliatory punishment. Since that time, he has used the name Fred Bassett Blair.

Blair served all but two weeks of his one-year sentence. He was pardoned by Gov. Phil LaFollette after several university professors appealed for his release. Dr. Alexander Meikeljohn of the UW was quoted as saying: "Carroll is a bright boy who has suffered a great deal." Another professor called him "a brilliant student."

Carroll Blair had been classified

by other professors at the UW as "one of the most intelligent students. In tests taken by UW students in comparison with seniors at the University of Pennsylvania, he ranked second."

Interviewed in his Milwaukee book store Saturday by The Wauwasha Argus, Blair said that Fred Bassett was the name of an uncle from Berlin, Wis.

During his year in prison, Blair was nominated by the Communist Party as its candidate for governor. That "campaign" netted the Communists 2,298 votes throughout the state. A few of the votes were from Redgranite.

After his release from jail, the Communist Party held "a coming-out party" for Blair at the Columbia Theater in Milwaukee.

Of that event, the Milwaukee newspapers reported:

"Approximately 1,000 persons attended. Blair, the chief speaker and plainly a hero to the crowd, kept the audience in an uproar with his digs and wisecracks at the capitalist system and the bosses."

"If there is war with the Soviet Union," Blair was quoted as saying at that rally, "we know where we will stand. This may sound like treason, but the United States is the bosses' country. It's not the workers' country!"

After being arrested on a second charge in connection with the same Haymarket Riot, Blair, then 23, told a Milwaukee newspaper reporter: "My life is dedicated to the revolution."

This "dedication" has led Carroll Blair into many skirmishes with the police during the last 30 years.

In 1931 he was arrested for a mob riot and attacking police in a Communist melee in Kenosha. In 1934 he was sentenced to prison for another six months in connection with another Communist demonstration in Milwaukee. And in 1936 he was arrested in Milwaukee on a common drunk charge. Also, he confesses, the FBI is "always" keeping an eye on him.

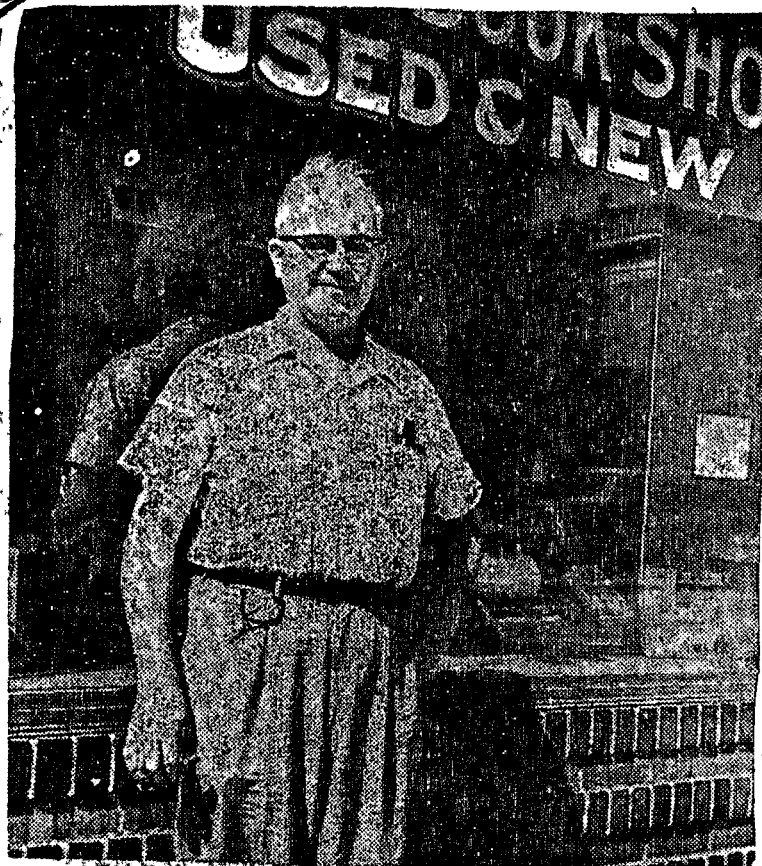
This "dedication" also led him into serving as the Communist Party's official candidate for several political offices.

At least twice he ran for governor. In 1934 he was the Communist

his classes, the lowest grade Carroll ever scored at WHS was a 93. All his other grades were 96 or 97. In history, physics and English, his best studies. His transcripts from Fond du Lac were all "excellent" or "good".

When the class of 1923 was graduated, Carroll Blair was picked as Salutatorian. He was "just a point or so" behind Carolyn, who was Valedictorian.

DEDICATED TO CO



CARROLL BLAIR TODAY — This is Carroll Blair, one-time Waushara County boy who is now one of the top Communists in the country — a member of the Communist Party's National Committee. Blair, standing in front of the Milwaukee book store which he operates, has been Communist Party candidate for governor and many other offices, as well as Communist Party Chairman for the State of Wisconsin.

candidate for congress. On other occasions he ran as the Communist candidate for United States Senator, as well as for Mayor of Milwaukee.

In October, 1938, while campaigning for votes for Senator, he shouted from a soapbox platform in Milwaukee: "I am an atheist."

In November of 1939, he led a Communist rally in Milwaukee and stood on a platform flanked by two huge 10-foot pictures of Stalin on one side and Lenin on the other.

Communists always met at night with the plot to "take peace". It is easy to see how Carroll Blair can speak passionately of his pursuit of peace. He talks as if his was the only family ever to feel the sting of war.

But for every Communist, there comes the time when Stalin or Khrushchev or whoever is the deta-

iled the "Geneva conference" between Khrushchev and Eisenhower had changed things and permitted him to end his underground "exile".

Blair's stormy career in Communism also led him through at least three marriages.

Married first in 1933, he was divorced in 1934. On June 15, 1937, he married Elizabeth Smith, "a member of a wealthy Milwaukee family". She divorced him in 1950 on grounds

that he "refused to explain long absence from home". (This wife later married a Negro from Frankfort, Ky.)

In 1951 Blair married Mary R. who operated the People's Bookstore for the Communist Party at 722 W. Wisconsin Avenue in Milwaukee. Later they opened the Mark Twain Bookshop at 1010 W.

Milwaukee, Wis.

Dec. 22, 1930

Secretary, Wautoma High School Alumni Association

"I am sorry that I can't be with you at the annual alumni banquet. Year after year since I was graduated

that "No paperbacks or modern novels" are carried.

You noisily scuffle your feet on the old wooden floor as you walk about the small room and cough again, louder this time. After a while, somewhere in the back room a faucet is turned on and somebody is washing his hands.

Finally, a short, slightly pudgy, over middle-aged man emerges from the darkness of the back room. You introduce yourself.

"Yes," he says, "I am Fred Blair."

He is friendly and hospitable. You explain your mission. Carroll Blair, alias Fred Bassett, and now Fred B. Blair, is not hostile. Indeed, he seems pleased to have the opportunity to talk to someone about Waushara County.

"Is Dan Chase still around there?" he asks. "I remember him well. He was a junior when I was a senior. And Carmen Johnson, I think she became a teacher, is she still there? She was Valedictorian of our class. She skinned me out by a couple of points. But gee, I was such a kid then, not even 17, and I had stayed out of school one year to work on the farm."

And then he starts talking about the agriculture of the area. He knows what it's about. "How did they ever solve the problem of the bugs and blight?" he asks.

"I remember," he continues, "the old O'Connor farm near Hancock. It was always the pride of the area. Everything else could be burnt to a crisp, but it would always be green and lush."

"That experimental station at Hancock," is it still there? "It sure did a lot for that country up there."

"I'm sure glad to see they're planting trees up there," he goes on. "That'll be the salvation of that country, to stop the run-off."

Then you ask how come his family settled in Waushara County and what became of them.

"I was born in Berlin," he begins. "Then we moved to Fond du Lac and after my brother died on the way to France, we sold the house and with the money from the insurance we bought the old Parker homestead from a Mr. Fry. We didn't do too well and after a couple of years we lost the farm."

"My family has all moved away from there now. There are still some of my mother's relatives, but the family is scattered all over the country now."

You talk in generalities for a while. And then you ask: "How did you ever come to be a Communist?"

"It's hard to say," Carroll Blair begins, "exactly how I got started thinking that way. I would say probably the earliest thing was when my brother died in the First World War. That was a real shock to me. Then when I saw the family lose the farm. And then when I worked in Redgranite and Fond du Lac, there was a lot of talk about unions and the eight hour day and pensions and so forth."

I've never been able to come. Usually, the reason was lack of money.

"Now, added to this is the presence of iron bars not only between me and Wautoma but between me and every other place I'd like to be.

"Banquets are not for workers in these days of capitalism! You must banquet without me, not only now, but so long as capitalism lasts. But when we workers have destroyed this system, and have started the construction of the Socialist world, then I shall banquet in Wautoma—then the workers will banquet all over.

"Let us hope that you, and all other Wautoma alumni, will be eligible to come to our banquet. Meanwhile, LIVE THE REVOLUTION!"

signed, CARROLL BLAIR

tor at the time makes a sudden decision and reverses the whole trend of Communist preaching. Such an occasion came in the late 1930's.

The Communist line then was that Roosevelt was a "warmonger" and that the U.S. and Britain were following "imperialistic policies designed to push the people into war". (It's their same line today). That's when Russia was honeymooning with Hitler. But after the honeymoon was over, the Communies had to preach a different line.

For Carroll Blair the accommodation must not have been difficult: "Get the U.S. into war; help save Russia!" he shouted from a loudspeaker to Milwaukee crowds going home from afternoon shopping in August, 1941. And again in 1942 he was pleading for an acceleration of war by demanding: "Open a second front now."

So great was his "dedication" to Communism, that by 1945 he was elected State Chairman of the Communist Party. In 1946 he was a member of the National Committee, the Communist Party's top ruling body in the U.S.

In 1951 he "vanished" and went underground along with many other Communists in the U.S. In 1955 he appeared at an open meeting and

North Avenue in Milwaukee and regularly sold Communist Party literature.

To make the story complete, The Argus editor wanted an interview with and a picture of the man who had shown such promise when he left Wautoma 38 years ago. After checking a number of prior addresses, we finally found his house. His wife said he could be located at a book store at Fifth and State in Milwaukee.

It is an old building nestled among other old buildings in an old section of downtown Milwaukee. New construction is under way on the street in front of the building. On Saturday afternoon the street in front of Mary's Book Store was deserted.

You go in the store.

There is no one there. Copies of the Communist Party newspaper, "The Worker", lie on the desk next to an ancient Woodstock typewriter. No one comes to greet you. You cough loud to apprise whoever may be about of your presence. Still no one comes.

Somewhere in a backroom a radio is recounting the tribulations of the Milwaukee Braves. You look at the books on the shelves: They are ancient. A sign informs you

"But I don't think I would have ever become a Communist if I hadn't seen a pamphlet called, 'The People's Marx' after I got out of my second year at the university and went back to work in Milwaukee."

Asked how he could be a Communist when he sees what the Communists are doing now in Germany and have done in Korea and Hungary, Carroll Blair tells you that it is you who are misled because "the monopoly press" is lying and the only paper that tells the truth is the Communist paper.

"I read 'The Worker,'" he says, "and I accept it. Not uncritically, but I accept it as being more the truth than what the New York Times says". Khrushchev, he says, is telling the truth, but "Kennedy is just telling us what the big corporations want him to say."

You ask him how much it cost to print that Communist ad in the Oshkosh paper and he says "about \$160." And it cost much more to print it in Madison, Racine and Kenosha papers.

"I'm negotiating now," he says, "to have the Journal and the Sentinel print it," he says, "but they're shying away from it." He said it will cost \$900 to print the ad in the Journal and \$600 in the Sentinel, if those papers accept it.

Where did the money come from? Carroll Blair tells you that "Many Republicans and Democrats who are fearful of the growth of Fascism" helped raise the money.

As you talk, two old men, one badly crippled—there is a "Rescue

Mission" upstairs around the corner—come in and buy copies of the latest Communist paper.

"As far as Hungary goes," Carroll Blair says, "my sister has been over there since 1949 and she tells me things are a lot better than what the capitalist press reports." He said that he tried to get a passport to go there recently to attend the wedding of a nephew, but "the state department wouldn't give me a passport".

As you prepare to leave, he gathers a few old mimeographed copies of poetry he has put together in pamphlet form to give you, along with several copies of the Communist newspaper. One of them, bound in a soft cover printed booklet, is entitled, "Our Brother Bill". It is about a younger brother who volunteered and went to Spain to serve with the International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War. (The brigades were considered dominated by Communists.) Bill was wounded during a retreat, captured by the Franco legions and sentenced to death. He was later freed through efforts of the U. S. State Department.

In that poem, Carroll Blair writes of "farming life" thus:

"Whenever crops are good,
The price is low, and bankruptcy
results.

But when the crops are bad, and
prices rise,

There's nothing to be sold, and

bankruptcy.

comes just as surely.

"... The grinding toil,
Sun-up till sun-down, with vaca-
tions absent;

The standards of existence slight-
ly higher

Than those of cows or pigs."

Asked if his brother Bill and his sister in Hungary are also Communists, Carroll Blair says he'd "rather let them answer that for themselves."

In April, 1947, Carroll Blair wrote another long poem, which he called "First Flight". On the inside cover of that booklet is this dedica-
tion:

"To the Communist Party of the
USA.

Indefatigable, indestructible, and
very soon to be the Party of the
majority of all Americans."

Today, undaunted by the killing in Korea, the butchery of Buda-
pest or the brutalities of Berlin, Carroll Blair, the bright young lad from Parker Valley has sold his soul to a conspiracy where the individual is not allowed to think for himself. And he is still running his heart out. But it's not in the arena where the "main event" is going on—where everyone is enter-
ed in the same contest—to improve the conditions of all mankind. In-
stead, he's running on the treadmill of Communism.

You wonder: Where'd he get off
the track?

Parker Valley and Wa-
shington

When the track team
was going, Carroll Blair
was in the half-mile, the
mile events. He won them
one afternoon—and he still

As one of the former class
boys who hadn't dropped
out of the way were all falling in the d-
ropout again just for the fun of

In his classes, the lowest grade
ever scored at WHS was a 93.
and English, his best studies. His ti-
tles from Fond du Lac were all
"A" or "B" or "C".

When the class of 1923 was graduated
Blair was picked as Salutatorian. He
was a point or so behind Carmen
who was Valedictorian.

He was the address that night

By CHARLES B. MORGAN
Of The Journal Staff

Gathering information about Milwaukee's Communists is a job like threading a small needle. It can be done, but it isn't easy.

There are Communists in Milwaukee, of course. But, as one official jokingly put it, "Few are admitting it these days." They meet secretly, usually in gatherings of three, four, six or eight, in private homes. The party headquarters there has long been closed.

The FBI and the Milwaukee police department's subversive squad watch them closely. "They see a Communist under every bed and around every corner," one Communist said bitterly.

No Numbers Given

If the FBI and the subversive squad do know how many Communists there are here, they aren't saying.

Neither are the Communists. It seems safe to say, however, that the number is small. It seems never to have been more than about 1,000, possibly not even that many.

But the ones left are the fanatics, the hard core Communists, and probably the most dangerous, a government official said.

Difficult to Characterize

There are those who believe the party is seriously ill, near death. Others say it's just old and tired. Still others think that it is a sleeping tiger that it dreams of a comeback.

It is difficult to say precisely what the party is these days. One thing it is not is dead, according to one of Milwaukee's known Communists.

Fred Bassett Blair, 3236 N. 150th, a long time party member who operates a book store at 218 W. Juneau av., said, "Any reports that the Communist party is dead are exaggerated. You'll be hearing from us." Blair described himself as the Communist party's Wisconsin spokesman.

He declined to name the party's state officers or to discuss further the activities of Communists here.

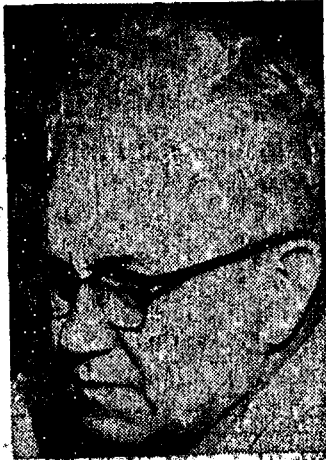
Blair's store specializes in Marxist works and writing on labor and Negro history. He also sells the Daily Worker.

days in New York. "Anyone can get a copy," he said. "Just drop in and see me."

No Comment by Shaw

Alan V. Shaw, 3472 N. Frederick av., who has been listed in the past as a state officer, was equally tight lipped. "Don't even quote me as saying no comment," he said. Shaw is employed by a local tile and linoleum store.

Another known Communist is Sigmund G. Eisenscher, 2556 N.



Journal Photo
Fred Bassett Blair

Lake dr., who was the party's county chairman in 1957. He could not be reached for comment.

Those who should know about such matters say the goals of Communists here are the same as those of the national party, which presumably dreams of a comeback.

Gus Hall, the national party leader, appears to have set his sights primarily on civil rights groups, the college campus and so-called progressive politicians.

Blair Admires Hall

Blair said he "admired" Hall and trusted his wisdom in party affairs.

Hall's interest in college campuses seems to be a hope that the party will pick up a few recruits there. Between 1961 and 1963, it has been reported, leading Communists made 91 speeches in 80 educational institutions, including several in Wisconsin.

How successful they have been on campus is probably anyone's guess.

On the political front, Hall has been quoted as saying the

party's program calls for "left formations" to help elect "new forward looking, progressive congressmen and senators, as well as members of state government bodies."

Alliance With Liberals

One Milwaukee observer of Communist activities interpreted Hall's words this way. "I understand that a hope for survival of the Communist party lies in a new alliance with the liberals. They speak of Democratic liberals. Their leaning seems to be toward the pacifist liberals of an older generation. In effect, what they are proposing is to choose Democratic liberals behind whom they can concentrate their best efforts."

The Communists are active, too, on the civil rights battle ground.

Atty. Lloyd A. Barbee, president of the Wisconsin conference of branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said such attempts had been made here.

Refused Participation

The most recent one, he said, was last year when a few Communists made an effort to "either take over or give a black eye" to the sit-in demonstration by civil rights groups in the state capitol at Madison. The sit-in was held to advocate a fair housing bill in the legislature. It was subsequently defeated.

Barbee said civil rights leaders for the state had come

to allow some persons to participate. These people, he said, "we believe were more than sympathetic with the Communist cause."

He also pointed out that the state NAACP had adopted and readopted a resolution for the last three years condemning Communists and fellow travelers. The resolution states that Communists are not eligible for membership in the NAACP and that the NAACP will not cooperate in any way with such groups.

Barbee said the Milwaukee, Madison and state NAACP organizations "had battled with the Communists and beat them." He said he did not believe Communists now posed any threat to civil rights organizations in Wisconsin.

He also said he did not believe that communism appealed to Negroes.

Most Get Disenchanted

Communists, Barbee said, "are condescending as any bigot. They attempt to brainwash Negroes." He said a Communist tells a Negro that his racial problems are primarily economic and communism offers the solution.

But, said Barbee, Communists "require allegiance to their cause rather than to solving racial problems. Most Negroes who flirt with communism get very disenchanted."

John H. Givens Jr., chairman of the Milwaukee chapter of the Congress of Racial Affairs,

said his organization had not encountered any Communists.

He also said he did not think there was any support among Negroes here for communism. "I think that the Negro himself basically has so many problems that he doesn't have time to get into and understand that Communists are offering."

"Moreover," he added, "the Negro really has a strong, devoted and dedicated allegiance to his country, despite all of his shortcomings and despite the fact that he has been trampled upon for so long."

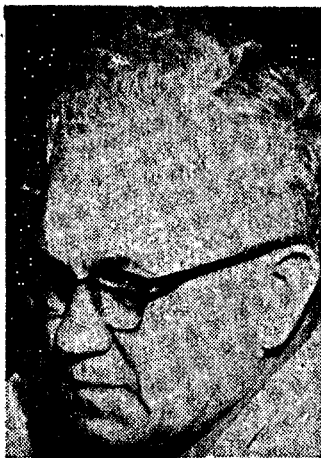
If as Blair said, the party is not near death, it also appears that it's no sleeping tiger. It mostly appears to be old and tired.

Wisconsin's 400 member Communist party is moving toward open political activity, but more timidly than its national parent organization, the Communist Party U.S.A.

The Wisconsin party chairman, Fred Bassett Blair of Milwaukee, said in an interview that he personally favored running a party member for governor this year, although "we haven't decided yet."

Blair also said the party would hold a state convention in June, before the party's national convention the same month in New York city. He said he doubted that the state meeting would be open to the public.

By contrast, the national Communist party hopes to interest major newspapers and television networks in its public convention, and one of its leading members, Herbert Aptheker, intends to run for con-



—Journal Photo

Fred Bassett Blair

gress in a New York district this year.

New Party Program

The activity of both the national and Wisconsin party organizations is connected with a new party program made public in February in New York.

Copies of the program, which proposes a more public role for the Communist party and its merger with "the left" in American politics, are being distributed nationally.

Joel Brandt, business manager of the Worker, national Communist newspaper published in New York, was in Milwaukee last week to promote sales of the 182 page program.

Interviewed with Blair, Brandt said the Communist party was "fighting for the American right to present an opinion to the public, in debate, polemics or dialog."

He said Blair, who operates Mary's bookstore, 318 W. Juneau av., had sold about 400 copies of the green covered party program, and had ordered 360 more.

5,000 Sold in Chicago

Three other bookstores visited by Brandt and Blair declined to handle the paperback; three ordered or promised orders of 10 copies.

Brandt said 5,000 programs

had been sold in Chicago, 500 in St. Louis, 3,000 in Detroit, 1,000 in cities in Minnesota and 3,000 in Ohio.

"Six years ago," Brandt said, "selling a book like this as readily as this would not have been possible."

Blair said he agreed with the program's general policy of entering candidates openly as Communists in state and local elections, but said Wisconsin law "makes it very difficult."

A 1941 state statute says that "... no party shall be recognized or qualified to participate in any general election which is directly or indirectly affiliated ... with the Communist party of the United States.

Before the law was adopted, Blair himself was a Communist

candidate for mayor of Milwaukee twice, for governor once, for United States senator once and congressman once.

Harassment Charged

Blair indicated that the Wisconsin Communist party was reluctant to operate publicly because of what he said was harassment from the John Birch society and FBI.

He said that while the party had about 400 members in Wisconsin. "My policy is that I don't give out figures," he said. "You get into particulars and the FBI and Birchers get after them."

It has been the policy of the party to keep no detailed membership records, Brandt said, because the "FBI is always

digging for names and addresses."

Blair estimated, however, that there were 150 or 200 Communist party members in Milwaukee and the remainder of about 400 in other Wisconsin cities and rural areas.

He said that perhaps 30% to 40% of party members were farmers or persons connected with agriculture, and that new members were "mostly youths."

Commenting on the new party program, Blair said that he fully supported its appeal to members of various religious faiths to work with Communists for a "better life on earth."

On this point, the program states: "Marxists disagree philosophically with the supernat-

ural, mystical elements of religion; nevertheless we recognize many positive, humanist values in ethical and moral precepts of several religions."

Blair said: "We've had many Catholics in the party" in Wisconsin, reflecting the national program's statement that "our party is made up of believers and nonbelievers."

Negro, Labor Ties

Blair also judged as realistic the program's proposed coalition of "labor and the Negro people." He said that "Milwaukee to a certain extent lags" in this respect, but he suggested that racial prejudice was not the reason.

"The opposition to integration on the south side doesn't come

from the Polish," he said, as an example, "but the real estate brokers."

On the program's appeal to farmers to join the "working class," Blair said Wisconsin's farmers "may not want nationalization of land, but on the question of monopolies, workers and farmers can get together."

GI's Steal Goods for Black Market

Saigon, Vietnam — P — Two United States soldiers were under arrest in Saigon Tuesday for attempting to deliver \$13,000 in stolen army food, brandy and wine to the black market. Police said the soldiers had disguised an American truck as a garbage van and loaded it with the goods.

2012 North Third Street

53203

Wisconsin

ATTENTION

In view of the rising threat from fanatical armed right-wing bullies throughout America, as exemplified in Milwaukee by the attack on Fred Bassett Blair, and the bombing of the NAACP headquarters in Milwaukee, and the bombing of John Gilman's place of business, we ask all Democratic Socialists and other believers in democracy to oppose the use of violence in politics as strongly as possible and to inform their legislators of their views. We urge all union members, civil rights activists and liberals to bring this threat to the attention of their supporters. Violence breeds violence and must be eradicated from the world.

Adopted by the Joint Meeting, State Executive Committee and the Milwaukee County Central Committee, Socialist Party - Social Democratic Federation of Wisconsin, December 10, 1966, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

LOCAL NEWS

PAGE 5, PART 1

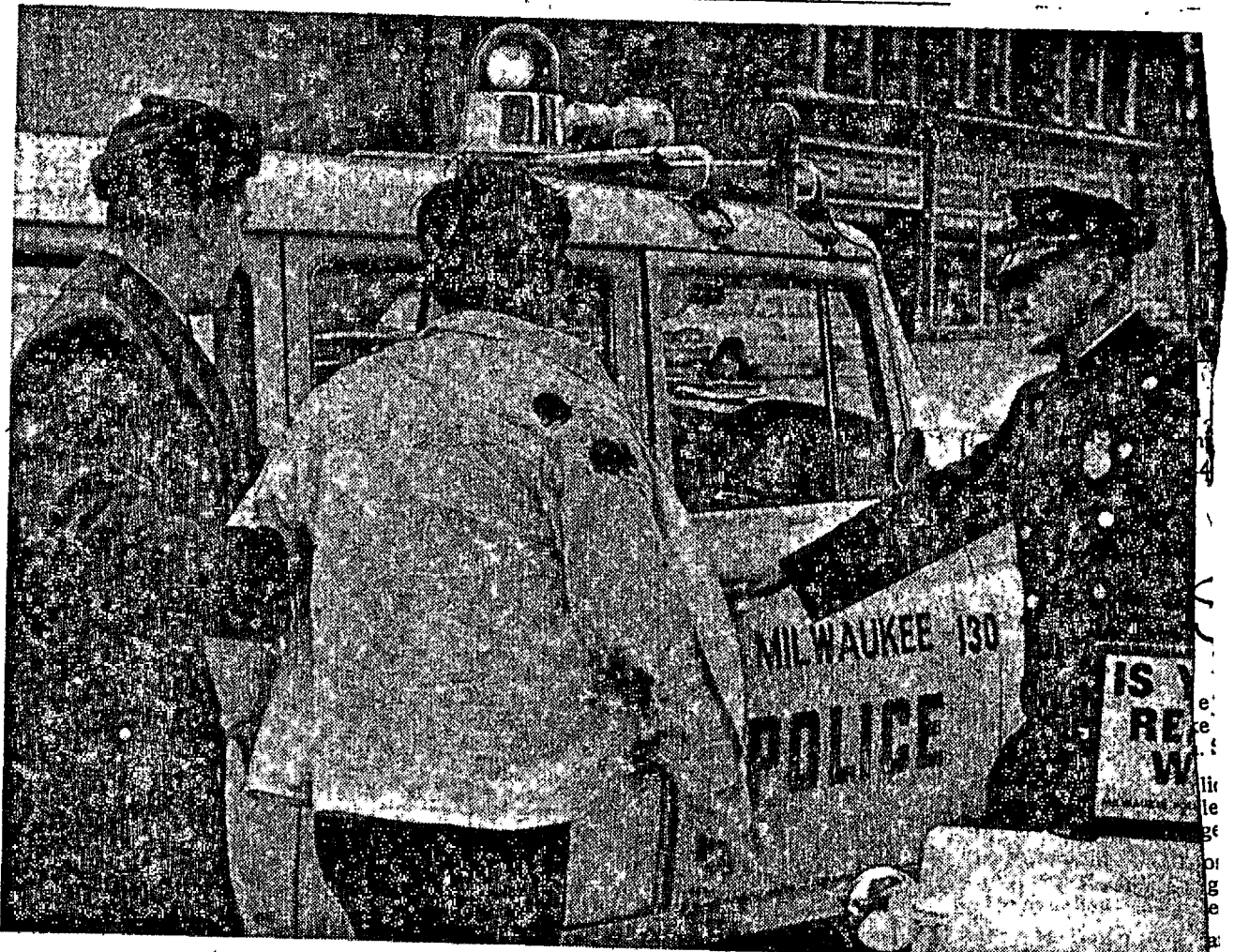
TUESDAY, NOV. 29, 1966



A youth who, police said, threatened Fred Bassett Blair, chairman of the Wisconsin Communist party, was

wheeled from Mary's bookstore after Blair said he hit the youth with a toy baseball bat.

—Sentinel Photo



The shirt of Ralph H. Sacks showed spots of blood at the shoulder and elbow Monday as he was led to a police squad ambulance. Sacks was shot in Mary's bookstore,

318 W. Juneau av., while trying to take a gun from a youth who had entered the store. He was listed in

Blair, who is chairman of the Wisconsin Communist party, reported that the youth told him after the attempted attack that he "wanted to kill a Communist."

Blair, a rotund 5 foot 4 man with receding gray hair, said that when the youth approached the counter, "he asked me in a very polite voice, 'Are you Mr. Blair?'"

When Blair replied that he was, the youth reached for his gun "with a very pleasant smile on his face," the bookshop owner recalled.

"What saved my neck was that it got stuck in his coat and he had to struggle with it," Blair said. "I guess it was the long barrel. That gave me a chance to duck and Ralph the chance to grab him."

"After we got him down, I

Friend's Help, Slow Draw Saved Blair

Fred Bassett Blair said he's alive because of the quick action of a book salesman friend, a youthful gunman's slow draw and a toy baseball bat.

The friend, Ralph H. Sacks, 26, of 2741 N. Frederick av., said, "I did what had to be done."

It was Sacks who rushed Blair's would-be assailant Monday afternoon, when the 17 year old youth pulled a pistol in Mary's bookstore, 318 W. Jeanneau av.

"If Ralph didn't have that courage, I wouldn't be alive right now," said Blair, 60.

"Ralph is such a mild guy usually that I never would have thought he could have done it. I'm sure he couldn't have acted if it hadn't been for his service training."

Sacks said that he was discharged from the air force in 1960 after three years' service, but he said that had little to do with his reaction.

"You do what you can . . . when such a goofy, irrational thing happens," he told a reporter after returning home.

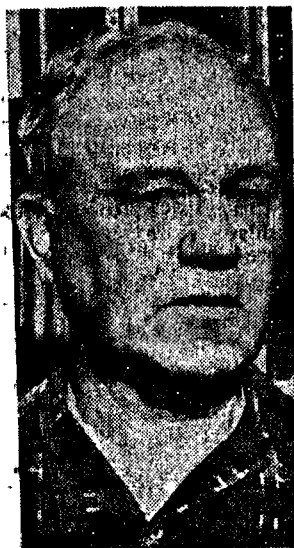
Sacks said he didn't stop to think when he saw the gun, "except that I knew I had to get it (the weapon)."

As Sacks continued to struggle with the youth, Blair grabbed a small baseball bat from behind the counter and hit the intruder over the head until he dropped the pistol and fell to the floor.

The bat, he explained later, "has been lying around here for a couple of years. It came with a bunch of books."

"I've been trying to get rid of it, but nobody wanted it," Blair said.

He described it as about 18 inches long, and about an inch and a half thick at the end.



FRED BASSETT BLAIR

—Sentinel Photo

sent Ralph out for the police. I didn't know he'd been shot," Blair said.

He said that as he guarded the youth, "I felt sorry for him. But I told him that if he made a move I'd hit him again."

A Communist party member for 37 years, Blair said that he had been threatened many times over the years, especially recently. "I haven't paid too much attention to them," he said.

He has been operating a bookstore for 12 years—four at the present location.

Blair tied the attempted attack to "Johnson's war in Vietnam—this insane foreign policy. People feel that if it's all right to kill Communists somewhere else, they might as well at home too," he said.

Sacks said that because of his book sales he was acquainted with Blair and other Milwaukee area book dealers, although "most of my business is done through the mails."

Sacks said he was born in Chicago, and came here at age 4. He and his wife, Susan, have a daughter, Belle, 4. He completed his high school education in the air force, Sacks said.

Of his wounds, Sacks said: "It's painful, but it's better than being dead."

A youth who
chairman of

The shi
the shou
squad a

white family.

Paul D. they live at 444 Newberry blvd.

Milwaukeean a Hero

The Carnegie Hero Fund commission has awarded a Milwaukee man \$1,150 and a bronze medal for helping subdue an armed youth threatening to kill Fred Bassett Blair, chairman of the Wisconsin Communist party.

Honored was Ralph H. Sacks, 27, of 2741 N. Frederick av.

Sacks was credited by Blair, 60, with saving his life when the youth, 17, entered Blair's book store, saying: "You're a Communist. I want to kill a Communist."

Police said that the mentally disturbed youth drew a .22 caliber target pistol after asking Blair to identify himself. They said Sacks lunged at the youth trying to disarm him.

In the struggle, Sacks was wounded in the right elbow, shoulder and side.

The youth was finally disarmed and clubbed into submission by Blair.

The incident occurred Nov. 28, 1966, in Blair's store, Mary's Bookshop, 318 W. Juneau av.

Milwaukee Journal
1967 Jan 9

Youth Ruled Pa- ks Mentally Ill in Shooting

A 17 year old youth who shot a salesman in a Communist book store was found mentally ill Monday by Circuit Judge Robert W. Landry, sitting in the children's court.

Judge Landry ordered the youth to the Winnebago state hospital for treatment for an indefinite term and denied a motion to turn him over for trial. The judge acted after the testimony of two court appointed psychiatrists.

The youth wounded Ralph Sacks, 26, of 2741 N. Frederick av., in Mary's bookstore, 318 W. Juneau av., Nov. 28. The store is operated by Fred Bassett Blair, 60, of 3236 N. 15th st., a long time Communist and chief spokesman for the party in Wisconsin.

The Brookfield youth shot Sacks, a book salesman who was picking up an order, during a scuffle. Blair clubbed the youth into submission with a small baseball bat he kept under a counter.

Blair told police he asked the youth who had sent him. The youth replied it was his own idea.

"You're a Communist. I want to kill a Communist," Blair quoted the youth as saying.

Elmer
former t
ten tave



Smith
lounge.
stores S
edable
tavern b

Smith
erator o
about a
on highw

Smith v
jury and
in the sta
Circuit Ju
stayed th
Smith or
year and

Ozaukee
Walter S
cuted the
been noti
made the
but never
the pardon

The D

Psychiatric Exam Ordered

Circuit Judge Robert W. Landry, sitting on the children's court bench, Wednesday ordered a psychiatric examination for a 17 year old youth who shot a bookseller Nov. 28 in a bookstore operated by the chairman of the Communist party of Wisconsin.

The order by Judge Landry came at a hearing or a motion filed by the district attorney's office that children's court waive jurisdiction over the youth so that he could be tried as an adult.

The youth was clubbed into submission with a small baseball bat at Mary's Bookstore by Fred Bassett Blair, 60, the state Communist party chairman. However, before the youth was subdued he shot and wounded Ralph Sacks, 26, of 2741 N. Frederick av., book salesman, police said.

Judge Landry adjourned the hearing until Jan. 9, and ordered that the boy be examined by two psychiatrists before that time.

Exam Slated for Youth Who Shot Salesman

MILWAUKEE (AP) — A psychiatric examination was ordered Wednesday for a 17-year-old boy who shot and wounded a man in a book store operated by Fred Bassett Blair, state Communist Party chairman.

The order by Circuit Judge Robert Landry, sitting in Children's Court, came at a hearing on a motion by the district attorney's office that Children's Court waive jurisdiction so the youth could be tried as an adult.

Police said Blair, 60, used a baseball bat to subdue the youngster after Ralph Sacks, 26, a book salesman was wounded at the store Nov. 28.

The judge adjourned the hearing until Jan. 9 and ordered the boy examined before that time.

Jobs

ative at
No. will
the Mil
al wha
ir fir
and
waule
The
E. R.

AM

Air Pollution Post